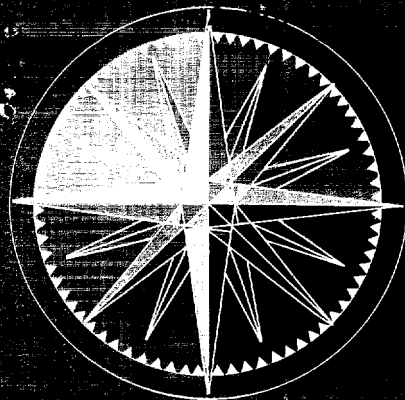


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SPECIAL REPORT

DE GAULLE'S EASTERN EUROPEAN POLICY

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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DE GAULLE'S EASTERN EUROPEAN POLICY

President de Gaulle seems to be accelerating and broadening his efforts to develop France's relations with Eastern Europe.

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[REDACTED] Further moves to increase cultural, economic, and technical ties with the bloc countries can be expected. De Gaulle is seeking to win support from various Eastern European leaders for some of his diplomatic initiatives elsewhere on the globe, and he may hope to gain their ultimate acceptance of his concept of a Europe from the "Atlantic to the Urals." He is motivated partly by a desire to encourage diversity among the Communist bloc nations, but he is also intent on a larger role for France in Western attempts to develop new relationships with Eastern Europe.

De Gaulle's View
Of Eastern Europe

De Gaulle, firmly believing that national interests transcend ideological considerations, has consistently maintained that resurgent nationalism would eventually disrupt Communist bloc unity. He probably views the current Soviet-Rumanian rift as only one manifestation, albeit a dramatic one, of a continuing evolution of the Eastern European states away from "Russian" domination. De Gaulle is convinced that the Eastern European states will ultimately gain their independence even though "national Communist" regimes friendly to the USSR could well remain in power.

The French President probably anticipates that the loosening of bloc ties would produce a politically fluid situation

similar to that which prevailed in Europe before World War II. Diverse competing national interests would be curbed, however, by developing political unity on a confederal basis broader than the "Six," and France's geographic position and diplomatic skill, abetted by its nuclear force, would magnify its voice in European councils. The increasing possibility that resurgent German expansionism could be held in check through a European political union would, in De Gaulle's eyes, eventually induce the Eastern European countries to seek close ties with Western Europe.

Such ties would not involve the complete estrangement of the Eastern European states from the USSR, in De Gaulle's view. For the longer term, De Gaulle expects a continued

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Sino-Soviet split to produce a changed attitude in Moscow, leading it also to draw closer to Western Europe. His concept of a Europe extending from the Atlantic to the Urals is ill defined, and his assessment of Moscow's basic orientation appears influenced by his view that there is serious racial enmity between the Russians and the Chinese. He seems to hold that Russia has traditionally been Western oriented and that the pressure of Chinese imperialism along "the world's longest frontier" will force Moscow to seek its own place in a larger European context.

De Gaulle probably feels the change is "in the very nature of things," but would hesitate to predict any timetable. He is not averse to hastening events along their "inevitable" course, however, and he may feel that it is in France's interest to give them a push in Eastern Europe now. Rumania's recent efforts to expand its contacts with the West, coupled with De Gaulle's fears of a US-Soviet understanding at the expense of Western Europe's interests, have heightened his desire to strengthen ties with Eastern Europe before any swift-moving events limit his flexibility in the area.

French Initiatives

Paris apparently is campaigning to impress its overall foreign policy goals on various Eastern European governments and to remind them that, except for the USSR, France is

the only continental power with world-wide responsibilities and interests. Minister of State Louis Joxe, for example, discussed Southeast Asia and Cyprus with Tito in late June,

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The French are probably encouraging Poland to prod the Chinese into supporting French views on South Vietnam, although there is no evidence that the Poles are responding.

A Rumanian delegation including Premier Maurer and Foreign Minister Manescu, will arrive in France on 26 July to discuss "economic questions and other matters of mutual interest." The talks are likely to touch on credits, trade, and East-West relations, and Maurer may meet De Gaulle.

France also is devoting considerable effort to promoting cultural exchanges with Eastern Europe. The importance which De Gaulle attaches to this cultural drive was evidenced last December when Paris pointed to its cultural interests in Eastern Europe as a partial justification for raising to embassy rank its diplomatic missions in Budapest, Sofia, and Bucharest. Provisions for French-language instruction in universities, the export of French books, periodicals, and newspapers, and wider contacts with Eastern European intellectuals are part of Paris' attempt at a cultural re-entry into

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Eastern Europe. The French-Yugoslav cultural accord signed in June is the first concluded by France with a Communist country as contrasted with its 2-year "protocols" with all other Eastern European countries except Czechoslovakia.

France plans to allocate more funds to Eastern Europe under its "Second Five-Year Plan for Overseas Cultural Expansion" (1965-69) and French action in the cultural sphere will be increasingly directed at Eastern European youth. In this connection Paris probably will raise the number of scholarships awarded to bloc students (288 in 1963).

Paris has signed bilateral technical and scientific exchange agreements with the USSR and all Eastern European countries except Czechoslovakia. More than 80 scientists, none of them atomic specialists, were exchanged between the USSR and France during 1963. Last month Francis Perrin, French Atomic Energy Commission director, visited Bucharest and predicted a "big development" in French-Rumanian scientific relations, particularly "in the field of nuclear physics." On 1 July, a delegation of scientists led by Andre Marechal, Paris' delegate general for scientific and technical research, toured Rumanian oil and petrochemical facilities and was received by Deputy Premier Gaston-Marín.

The French have trade agreements with the USSR and all the Eastern European states except East Germany. France maintains a favorable balance with Eastern Europe, excluding the USSR, and French exports to the area have increased more rapidly than those of all other NATO countries. Paris would like to sell more machinery, electrical equipment, and chemicals to Eastern Europe, but it is hampered by its adherence to the Berne Union Agreement restricting credits to the bloc to 5 years. French officials, however, repeatedly assert that if the common Western front on credits is broken, France will follow suit; in fact, the issue of credit repayment terms has been under intensive study in the French Foreign and Finance ministries for over a year.

Paris feels that long-term credits, if selectively extended, should be a valuable tool in relations with the Eastern European countries, such as Rumania, which are seeking to assert their independence from Moscow. The French are less enthusiastic about long-term credits to the USSR even though it cut purchases from France sharply in 1963. Moscow has asserted that it can do nothing to improve the trade balance until it received better credit terms. A Soviet delegation now in France to negotiate for a \$3.75-million petrochemical project is seeking 10-year credits.

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Some Eastern European Reactions

Eastern European reactions to recent French initiatives have been mixed. Hungary, for example, has been cautious but has responded favorably to French overtures to extend cultural agreements and is interested in expanding trade and technical relations with France. In recent months there has been a lively exchange of delegations, including the "first official visit in this century" by a French cabinet official. At the French Communist Party Congress in May, Hungary's Deputy Premier Kallai spoke favorably of De Gaulle's "sensible foreign policy steps" while condemning his "personal concepts."

France's relations with Czechoslovakia have improved somewhat over the past two years --probably on Czech initiative. Prague's greatest interest is in commercial relations. A 2-year trade agreement signed in January has probably paved the way for immediate expanded trade.

French-Yugoslav relations deteriorated during the Algerian war, but since it ended Yugoslav officials have clearly indicated a desire for better relations and encouraged the recent visit of the French minister of state to Belgrade.

France is one of the few Western European countries maintaining diplomatic ties (at legal level) with Albania. In his New Year's Eve address to

the French people, De Gaulle included Albania among those Communist countries whose assertion of greater national independence offered long-range advantages to the West. Neither country, however, has made any move to further improve relations, and no immediate change is expected.

The deterioration in French-Bulgarian relations in recent months is consistent with the over-all hardening of Sofia's line toward Western nations. France will participate, for the first time, in the Plovdiv International Trade Fair this September but the outlook for better French-Bulgarian relations is dim.

The Soviet Union

Contacts between Paris and Moscow have been increasing since De Gaulle recognized Communist China in January. Recent examples include French Finance Minister Giscard d'Estaing's trip to Moscow, ex-Premier Edgar Faure's private interview with Khrushchev, Nikolai Podgorny's talk with De Gaulle, and the Paris visit of Khrushchev's son-in-law. No major developments have resulted and De Gaulle has refused to set a date for complying with Khrushchev's long-standing invitation to Moscow.

De Gaulle continues to be cautious of Moscow's demarches, especially over Berlin, but his assessment of the nature of the Soviet threat appears to be

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changing. He may believe that Soviet policy is evolving to the point where the basis might be established for eventual negotiations on European questions in a new context. De Gaulle, meanwhile, seems ready to exploit the greater flexibility that an appearance of improved relations with the USSR would give him. One of his purposes could be to present more active French contacts with Moscow as supplementing and balancing his recognition of Peiping.

His objectives are long range but he fears events may move too fast. One fear, central to his entire foreign policy, is the possibility of a German-Russian agreement from which France would be excluded. He wants to be able to deal with the Russians after they have drawn closer to Western Europe and after the need for new global political balances becomes apparent.

Outlook

De Gaulle could seek, in several ways, to foster developments he expects to occur regardless of Moscow's policies. He could move to ease credit terms to bloc countries, particularly those demonstrating a desire for greater economic independence from Moscow. He

also could attempt to encourage the Eastern European states, perhaps starting with Rumania and Poland, to take steps toward closer commercial and economic ties with the EEC. De Gaulle would be unconcerned about Moscow's reaction since he is convinced the Russians will be eventually obliged to adapt themselves to new conditions.

De Gaulle might also make some dramatic gesture toward further disengaging France from NATO, partly with the motive of encouraging by example some of the Eastern Europeans to work toward some form of disengagement--over the long term--from the Warsaw Pact. De Gaulle's initial goal in such an exercise probably would be to demonstrate that "Europeans" can pursue courses of action and maintain interests without the sanction of the major power blocs. By arguing that NATO is disintegrating, he might hope eventually to persuade Moscow to act on the assumption that the *raison d'etre* for the Warsaw Pact had disappeared and that the Soviets could serve their interests equally well with a series of looser defense agreements with the Eastern European states.

The underlying purposes of any new French initiatives in the Communist bloc would be

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linked to De Gaulle's conception of the future of Europe. He probably feels that his idea of European unity associating all nations "from the Atlantic to the Urals," will become increasingly appealing to the Eastern Europeans and eventually to Moscow as the non-European races exert increasing pressure.

De Gaulle may also hope that a perceptible movement in Eastern Europe toward his version of European unity will help him win the support of his EEC partners--now adamantly with-

held--for his confederal scheme for Western Europe. In his New Year's address to the nation this year he said: "We must ...visualize the day when perhaps in Warsaw, Prague, Pankow, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, Tirana, and Moscow, the totalitarian Communist regime, which still manages to restrain imprisoned people, will step by step arrive at a conciliatory evolution together with our own transformation. At such time, prospects would be opened for all of Europe commensurate with its resources and capacities."

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